

## **§ 965.2**

### **§ 965.2 Scope of rules.**

The rules in this part shall be applicable to mail dispute cases forwarded to the Judicial Officer Department by the chief field counsel pursuant to Postal Operations Manual section 616.21.

[52 FR 29012, Aug. 5, 1987, as amended at 63 FR 66053, Dec. 1, 1998]

### **§ 965.3 Notice to parties.**

Upon receipt of a mail dispute case from the chief field counsel, the Recorder, Judicial Officer Department, United States Postal Service, 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 600, Arlington VA 22201-3078, will send a notice of docking and submittal due date to the parties together with a copy of these rules.

[52 FR 29012, Aug. 5, 1987, as amended at 63 FR 66053, Dec. 1, 1998; 67 FR 62179, Oct. 4, 2002]

### **§ 965.4 Presiding officers.**

(a) The presiding officer shall be an Administrative Law Judge or an Administrative Judge qualified in accordance with law. The Judicial Officer assigns cases under this part. Judicial Officer includes Associate Judicial Officer upon delegation thereto. The Judicial Officer may, on his own initiative or for good cause found, preside at the reception of evidence.

(b) The presiding officer has authority to:

(1) Take such action as may be necessary to preside properly over the proceeding and render decision therein;

(2) Render an initial decision, if the presiding officer is not the Judicial Officer, which becomes the final agency decision unless a timely appeal is taken; the Judicial Officer may issue a tentative or a final decision.

### **§ 965.5 Submittals by parties.**

Within 15 days after receipt of the Recorder's notice, each party shall file with the Recorder a sworn statement of the facts supporting its claim to receipt of the mail together with a copy of each document on which it relies in making such claim. All such submittals shall be in duplicate. Upon receipt of such evidence, the Recorder shall

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send a copy of each submittal to the opposing party.

### **§ 965.6 Comments by parties.**

Within 10 days of receipt of the other party's evidence, each party may file with the Recorder a statement setting forth in detail its disagreements, if any, with its opponent's statement and documents. The Recorder will send to each party a copy of the other party's comments.

### **§ 965.7 Default.**

A party who fails to file the submittal required by § 965.5 may be held in default and the presiding officer may issue an initial decision that mail be delivered to the other party.

### **§ 965.8 Hearings.**

(a) In the discretion of the presiding officer an oral hearing may be granted at the request of either, or both, parties or on the presiding officer's own initiative if there is a dispute as to a material issue of fact which can only be resolved by examination of witnesses.

(b) Hearings are held at 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22201-3078, or such other place as may be designated by the presiding officer.

[52 FR 29012, Aug. 5, 1987, as amended at 63 FR 66053, Dec. 1, 1998]

### **§ 965.9 Evidence.**

(a) In general, admissibility will hinge on relevancy and materiality. However, relevant evidence may be excluded if its probative value is substantially outweighed by the danger of unfair prejudice, or by considerations of undue delay, waste of time, or needless presentation of cumulative evidence.

(b) Testimony shall be given under oath or affirmation and witnesses are subject to cross-examination.

(c) Agreed statements to fact are encouraged and may be received in evidence.

### **§ 965.10 Transcript.**

Testimony and argument at hearings shall be reported verbatim, unless the presiding officer otherwise orders. Transcripts or copies of the proceedings are supplied to the parties at